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Preliminary: U.S. Imports for Consumption of Steel Products
December 2004

The U.S. Census Bureau, through the Department of Commerce, announced today that preliminary December steel imports were **$2.0 billion** (**2.5 million** metric tons) compared with $2.1 billion (2.8 million metric tons) in the preliminary November report.

The November to December change in steel imports, based on metric tonnage, reflected decreases primarily in blooms, billets, and slabs; hot rolled sheets; and reinforcing bars. An increase occurred primarily in wire rods. Monthly changes in steel imports reflected decreases primarily with Russia and Turkey. Increases occurred primarily with China and Mexico.

The year to date final statistics through November 2004 showed steel imports of 29.8 million metric tons, compared with 19.4 million metric tons through November 2003. The largest commodity increases were in blooms, billets, and slabs; hot rolled sheets; and wire rods. The largest country increases were with Russia, Turkey, Brazil, Mexico, and China.

Notes:

The data in this report are preliminary and subject to revisions.

Analysis of recent months for steel product imports indicates the value of preliminary data should equal about 96 percent of the final value reported in the regular monthly trade statistics report. Preliminary data reported for individual steel categories and at the individual country of origin level have been less consistently predictive of the final data reported in the regular monthly trade statistics. For further details visit the Foreign Trade Division web site at: www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/. On the web site you can access product by country and country by product tables.

The next release is February 23, 2005